

## New Minor Forcing

Consider the following hand after Partner Opens 1♦: ♠AK852 ♥K62 ♦82 ♣A82. You respond 1♠ and Partner rebids 1NT. You clearly have Game (26 HCP and looking at your hand 27/28 PP). Should you Rebid Spades to show an extra and chance that Partner might Pass? Jump to 4♣ Partner might only have 2♠'s? Should you Jump to 3NT? ♦'s might be a problem!! Maybe Partner has 3♠'s and then you should be in 4♠.

There is a Convention that solves problems of this sort; specifically you have a 5-Card Major and at least an invitational+ hand; Partner opens in a lower suit and show no support for your response. The Convention is called New Minor Forcing (NMF) because introducing a Minor after a sequence such as this is Forcing for 1-round and suggests that there is a Game Contract in this hand. NMF requires a 5-Card Major and 11+ HCP.

Another example: Partner Open 1♣ and you hold: ♠AK852 ♥962 ♦82 ♣A82. Again you respond with 1♠ and again Partner Rebids 1NT. This time you are not sure there is Game. If Partner in on the upper end of \what the 1NT rebid promises (13-14) there still might be a chance (with distribution points you have about 12 PP).

To invoke NMF in the 1<sup>st</sup> example Bid 2♣, and in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bid 2♦. In both cases you have introduced a new Minor after Partner bids 1NT in response. A **Forcing bid**. A Conventional bid that requires an **Alert**.

### **Responding to Forcing NMF Bid**

The NMF indicates the extra Card in the Major suit bid. Armed with this knowledge and your 11+ HCP Opener can bid 3♠, 4♠, 2NT or 3NT or possibly rebid the original Minor. Your Minor bid is artificial and says nothing about your holding in that suit.

A side benefit of using NMF is seen in this example: Partner Open 1♣ and you hold: ♠AK852 ♥962 ♦82 ♣982. Again you respond with 1♠ and again Partner Rebids 1NT. This time you do not have the points and can not bid NMF, so after the 1NT Bid you can Bid 2♠. In this case you are promising an extra ♠ but you are saying that you think that 2♠ is the better Bid and suggesting strongly that Partner **Pass**.

### **Another Situation Addressed by NMF**

Same starting scenario. Partner Opens 1♣ and you hold: ♠AK852 ♥KJ62 ♦82 ♣A2. Again you respond with 1♠ and again Partner Rebids 1NT. Without NMF you would rebid 2♥. This, as does NMF, tells Opening Partner that you have 5♠'s. But she doesn't know whether you have 4 or 5♥'s. Also she knows nothing about the strength of your hand. Solution: Bid 2♦ – NMF. If the Opener has 4 of the other Major, bidding that Major is the first obligation of the Partner of the NMF bidder; even if she holds 3 of the 1<sup>st</sup> Major. Here's a sequence 1♣ – P – 1♠ – P; 1NT – P – 2♦<sup>NMF</sup> – P; 2♥ – P – 4♥ – P; If the Opener also holds a 3-Card ♠ suit he could Bid 4♠, but generally it is preferable to play in a 4-4 fit versus a 5-3 fit.

Note: If over your NMF Partner doesn't bid ♥'s there is no need, with 4, for you to mention them. You can jump to 3♥ to show 5♥'s and Game going points. Then Partner know you are 5-5. If, on the other hand you have <11 HCP, you can Bid 2♥. Partner now knows you are either 5-5 or 5-4 and less than 11 HCP and can make the appropriate choice between ♥ and ♠.

It may seem complicated, it really isn't very complicated when you consider the bidding options that the Convention opens up for you.

### **Let's Summarize**

A sequence of a Minor responded to by a Major and followed by a rebid of 1NT sets the stage for

NMF. A bid of the other Minor kicks off NMF. Opener now has these choices (in priority order)

- 1) **Show unbid 4-Card Major**
- 2) **Support Partners 5-Card Major if you can**
- 3) **Unable to do (1) and (2) Show point range by bidding level of NoTrump if you hold stopper in suit used for NMF** (remember the bid in that suit was artificial).